

MICHIGAN LEGWORK

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH

JUNE 2006

Young Artists Are Greeted by Director Swanson

WITH GOV. JENNIFER GRANHOLM NAMING Robert Swanson director of the Department of Labor & Economic Growth on May 30, June has been his first full month on the job.

What could be more fitting as one of his first official duties than to meet and talk with children who are winners in DLEG's "Shaping Michigan's Future" art contest?

Director Swanson did just that on Tuesday, June 20, when six of the nine winning artists and their family members enjoyed a pizza luncheon in the Ottawa Bldg. He presented the children with certificates and medals inscribed with their names. Each child was also presented with a laminated copy of his or her artwork.

The winning artwork was selected based on creativity, artistic technique, and relevance to the theme.

The winners by age group are:

5–8 Years Old

1st Place: Rashna Soonavala, daughter of Anahita Lord, MRS Waterford
2nd Place: Sabrina Tran, daughter of Vanessa Tran, Internal Audit
3rd Place: Leigha Kobus, daughter of Dawn Kobus, OFIS

9–12 Years Old

1st Place: Christina Kerby, neighbor of Roseann Malama-Smith, Internal Audit
2nd Place: Taylor Barratt, granddaughter of Linda Cook, Media/PR
3rd Place: Sadie Bass, daughter of Laurie Bass, BCCFS

13–18 Years Old

1st Place: Cori Burns, grandson of Barb Buford, UIA Saginaw
2nd Place: Travis Collings, son of Kathy Collings, UIA Saginaw
3rd Place: Sheena Moore, daughter of Diane Moore, UIA Detroit

This has been the third year DLEG has held a children's art contest in conjunction with Bring a Child to Work Day, which was held April 27 this year. DLEG's graphic designers, Gina DiNatale Coon and Jim Kremer, have served as judges for the competitions.

Please go to pages 8–9 of this issue of *Michigan LEGwork* to see photos of the winning artwork. Also, photos from Bring a Child to Work Day and all of the submitted artwork can be viewed on the DLEG intranet.



Proudly showing off their medals, front row, l. to r., are Sabrina Tran and Rashna Soonavala; and second row, Travis Collings, Leigha Kobus, Sadie Bass, and Taylor Barratt, with Director Swanson.

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A Message from the Director

First, let me say thank you for your assistance during the transition while I served as DLEG's acting director. When I stepped up from deputy director to acting director, I realized there was much to be learned because of the size and scope of our department.

Change is never easy, but I feel the past few months went smoothly because so many of you offered your support and expertise during this transition. Much of our success was due to the fact that everyone pitched in and worked together as a team. I consider it an honor to be the director of such a talented and dedicated team.

I am asking for your continued support as we have just said goodbye to a key member of our executive team, Acting Deputy Director Irma Zuckerberg. Irma's last day at DLEG was Friday, June 23.

She did such a terrific job at DLEG that former Director David Hollister asked her to join Prima Civitas, a regional economic development group. While we will miss Irma, we can rest assured that she is still helping to further our mission of building Michigan's future. I will be sure to keep you posted when Irma's successor is named.

At a recent meeting of the DLEG Leadership Council, we had an excellent presentation and a lively discussion on our role in creating a 21st century workforce.

As I have mentioned in previous messages to you, our department is playing a critical role in Gov. Granholm's ambitious plan to turn our state's economy around — and a key part of this effort is the MI Opportunity Partnership initiative. While many people have heard of the MI Opportunity Partnership, we have found that many people do not have a clear definition of what the partnership is or how it relates to the governor's plan.

As a result, we've created a new publication to summarize all of our workforce efforts. I encourage you to take a few minutes to read it and keep a copy available to share with anyone who may have questions about the resources we offer to Michigan businesses and workers. You can access this publication at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/DLEG-EconomicOverview-v10_162647_7.pdf.

I would also like to mention that the Michigan Commission on Spanish-Speaking Affairs is seeking nominations for Michigan's first Hispanic Entrepreneur of the Year Award. The recipient will be honored at the Hispanic Business Expo on Sept. 7 at Renaissance Center in Detroit.

Small business owners are the ones who do most of the hiring in our state, and so I believe it is only fitting that we recognize and honor those who can inspire others to succeed in business.

The nominating criteria are:

- The individual must demonstrate appreciable economic growth to the Hispanic business and civic community as a result of his or her efforts.
- The individual's business must be viable with a track record of success that can serve as a role model for other Hispanic entrepreneurs.
- The individual must demonstrate a history of civic engagement and contribution to the quality of life for Hispanics through community service.

If you know someone who should be nominated for this award, please contact Vicky Potter at the COSSA office at (517) 373-8339, or go online at <http://www.michigan.gov/cossa>. Nominations for the award must be postmarked no later than July 18.

Best wishes for a safe and happy summer,



Robert W. Swanson

MICHIGAN LEGWORK

Published monthly for employees
of the Department of Labor
& Economic Growth

Robert W. Swanson,
Director

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Articles/photos may be e-mailed to breenl@michigan.gov or faxed to 517/241-1580. The Department of Labor & Economic Growth is an equal opportunity employer/program. This newsletter will be made available in alternate formats on request.



Goodbye Wishes to Irma Zuckerberg

A farewell reception was held Thursday, June 22, for Acting Deputy Director Irma Zuckerberg, who has accepted a position with Prima Civitas, the new regional economic development group headed by former DLEG Director David C. Hollister. Irma, who worked for the state for 26 years, was a driving force for the MI Opportunity Partnership initiative and helping employers and workers through Workforce Programs.



Robin Norton, Christine Holmes, Jeannine Benedict, and Nikki Sunstrum, all with the Office of Policy and Legislative Affairs, express their good wishes to Irma.



Myron Freeman with the Michigan Broadband Authority congratulates Irma.

Workforce System Partners Collaborate to Ensure One Stop Centers Are Inclusive

A set of guidelines to ensure that Michigan's workforce system practices the value of inclusion — i.e., that it serves all of Michigan's diverse citizens — has been produced by a statewide workgroup led by the Department of Labor & Economic Growth.

The *One Stop Inclusion Workgroup Final Report* notes that it is a core function of the Michigan Works! system to “assure the full access to facilities and programs for all employers and job seekers.”

Jaye Shamsiddeen, bureau director of Michigan Rehabilitation Services and workgroup co-chair, said the report recommends “measures to remove barriers and disincentives to serving populations with complex multiple needs.”

She added that the test of the report's usefulness “will be the degree to which it helps foster improved collaboration among all of Michigan's workforce system partners to realize the vision of a system that honors and accommodates diversity.”

Recommendations include implementing a continuous improvement plan to promote equitable service and outcomes, providing ongoing employee awareness and sensitivity training, and creating an online guide listing resources and great practices for making service centers more inclusive.

The publication is available online at http://michigan.gov/documents/One_stop_Brochure_161797_7.pdf.

DLEG staff serving on the workgroup were Marica Black-Watson, Patrick Cannon, Lisa Dove, Brenda Ely, Vicki Enright, Janet Howard, Brenda Njiwaji, Rick Olivarez, Bettie Shaw-Henderson, Mildred Williams, and Duncan Wyeth.

Partner agencies collaborating on the project were Capital Area Michigan Works!, Career Alliance, Inc., City of Detroit Workforce Development Department, Kalamazoo-St. Joseph Michigan Works!, Michigan Rehabilitation Council, Michigan Works! Association, Michigan Works! Region 7B Employment and Training Consortium, Office of Services to the Aging, Ottawa County Michigan Works!, and The Disability Network.



The publication of the *One Stop Inclusion Workgroup Final Report* was celebrated by workgroup members at Career Alliance, Inc., in Flint on May 26, when certificates of achievement were presented to all. Workgroup Co-chairs Brenda Njiwaji (left) and Jaye Shamsiddeen (right) also presented a certificate to MRS Consultant June Morse, who completed numerous revisions to the report.

Onsted Man Helps Save History with New Business

**Michigan Rehabilitation
Services staff who
assisted Russ Millett:**

Tim Guest

Jenny Piatt

Gale Parylak

After serving as a corporate sales representative/customer service technician for Kodak for 13 years, you're laid off. Businesses have stopped using film because of digital technology, and so Kodak must reduce its sales force.

You live in Onsted, a rural area of Michigan with no job opportunities in your field of expertise. So, what do you do now?

For Russ Millett, it was almost a no-brainer: Start your own business of digitalizing old photographs and slides to help corporations, universities, and foundations save their history. He calls the business "FineArt4 Imaging Systems, LLC."

"I sold the technology and I trained in it," he says. "It's what I know and what I'm good at. I love history, and our service is a service that will preserve history."

Russ explains that he and his wife, Jill, scan existing photos and slides and place them on compact disks — photos and slides that otherwise would disintegrate over time.



Russ Millett, shown above with his wife, Jill, says, "She has a special talent — an eye for the proper color in a photo. While I do marketing and sales, she's the technician and keeps the books." The Milletts have two children.

"For example, University of Michigan sports went filmless five or six years ago," Russ said. "But they still have about 120 years worth of film sitting somewhere. Nobody today is throwing their old images out; they want to save them, so they say, 'Go get the rest of my collection and match it with the new stuff.'"

Russ's tenure with Kodak has given him an advantage — the many contacts he made with folks in large corporations and other entities. "Over the past year, I have met with people I knew from before and have done test cases with them. They have confidence in me."

Indeed, Russ has talked not only with the U of M Athletics Department, but also with representatives from the major automakers, Automobile Racing Club of America (ARCA), the Michi-

gan Library and Historical Center, and the Adams County, Pa., Historical Society.

"I don't want to sell; I just ask 'do you need it or not?'" Then I tell them how they can pay for it," Russ says. "Maybe 20 percent of a collection has value to customers. If a company digitalizes these images and sells them on the company website, they can use the profits to digitalize the rest of their collection and save their history."

Russ credits Kodak with so much of what he knows about image technology — "I'm proud as heck to have worked for Kodak" — but he also credits Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) with giving him the boost he needed to start his own business.

Because Russ has a condition called audio dyslexia, which makes it difficult for him to communicate in writing, he was eligible for employment assistance from MRS. In early 2005, Russ teamed up with Tim Guest, a counselor at MRS's Adrian office, and from there was assisted in writing a business plan that helped him win approval of a \$40,000 bank loan.

"The loan helped us purchase a Kodak HR 500 high-volume film scanner, considered the best in the world," he said. "It can scan 400 images in an hour. We are also grateful that MRS purchased a state-of-the-art CD and DVD burner that puts labels on images; several software packages such as Photoshop; and some initial supplies."

One of the most important purchases MRS made was "NaturallySpeaking," an accommodation on Russ's computer that allows him to speak while the computer types the information. "It was needed because I can speak OK, but when I start to write, my language falls apart."

FineArt4 Imaging Systems, which marked its first anniversary in June 2006, is doing well. Russ notes that he currently has about 25 customers and will likely double that in six months.

"By last November, Jill and I were making enough money so that we could stop using our personal savings," he said. "I'd say there actually was a small profit during the first year, which is pretty good considering most new businesses don't see a profit for two or three years."

And when the time comes for Russ to start hiring employees of his own? "If I need employees to scan images, I'll be looking at MRS first."

Social Committee Helps Make UIA's Grand Rapids RICC a Special Place to Work

By Marianne Holst

While many work areas have social committees, the Social Committee at the Unemployment Insurance Agency's Remote Initial Claims Center (RICC) in Grand Rapids clearly helps to define that RICC and its staff.

In fact, according to Webster a social committee is described as — social — inclined to seek out or enjoy the company of others; sociable; and — committee — a group of people officially delegated to perform a function such as reporting or acting upon a matter; a person(s) to whom a trust or charge is committed.

The definition truly represents the Grand Rapids RICC Social Committee. Amid the whirlwind of many voices and throughout the hustle and bustle of their daily lives, RICC staff can rely on the Social Committee to make the center a friendly and enjoyable place to work.

Whether it is making sure a card is sent to an ill colleague, planning an amazing Holiday Extravaganza, or holding bake sales and silent auctions, the committee is there for all Grand Rapids RICC staff.

For example, over the past year, Debra Osmolinski along with the rest of the committee put together a Grand Rapids cookbook. Debra was extremely generous with her time and worked very hard to put together the book, which was filled with recipes from center staff. To top it off, the book was put onto a CD and then given to all RICC staff during the holidays.

Additionally, in December the Social Committee hosted a Holiday Extravaganza at the Amway Grand Center. It was a black tie affair with fabulous food, free gifts and yummy desserts! From the decorations, which were created by Cindy Walkington and co-workers and then given away, to the cute poem that was read by Sharron Wilson and the photographs taken by Debra Osmolinski, it was an enchanted evening for all staff.

Thanks go to the Social Committee for their support and commitment to staff. Especially since they do the work on their own time with non-state materials, they truly demonstrate that the Grand Rapids RICC is a very special place to work.



Members of the Grand Rapids RICC Social Committee are, front row, l. to r., Jeannine Zimmerman, Terri Snell, Chairperson Leona Robinson, and Missy Rodgers. Middle row: Mark Ellis, Dee Tokarski, Kathy Anderson, Cindy Walkington, Jessica Hart, and Sherry Caldwell. Back row: Sharron Wilson, David Haselschwerdt, Kevin Salyer, and Debra Osmolinski.

Summer Opportunities to Give Blood

In Detroit

Schedule your appointment today for the July 6 blood drive at Cadillac Place, sponsored by the Unemployment Insurance Agency. "Coming close after the holiday, your donation is more important than ever since collections are normally quite low on the days preceding and following a holiday," said Valerie Congdon. The drive will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Suite L-500. To schedule, go to <https://www.givelife.org> (Sponsor Code = nc).

In Lansing

The next blood drive at the Ottawa Bldg. will be held Friday, Aug. 4. For an appointment, call (517) 373-3489 or e-mail parrr@michigan.gov. Lori Parr reports that the Ottawa blood drive on June 9 brought in 68 pints!

For more information on the State of Michigan Blood Challenge, go to <http://www.michigan.gov/bloodchallenge>.



Jack Nolish Helps Kids Enjoy Safe Biking

By Norm Isotalo

For seven years now, the Michigan Trial Lawyers Association (MTLA) has sponsored an annual state-wide Helmet Safety Campaign to provide helmets for kids to wear while riding their bicycles, and Jack Nolish, director of the Workers' Compensation Agency, has been an active participant in the project.

Each year since 2000, MTLA members have purchased helmets. The association then organizes a series of events around the state where specially trained volunteers fit the helmets and teach kids and their families the importance of wearing a properly fitted helmet. MTLA volunteers donate a Saturday to fitting the helmets.

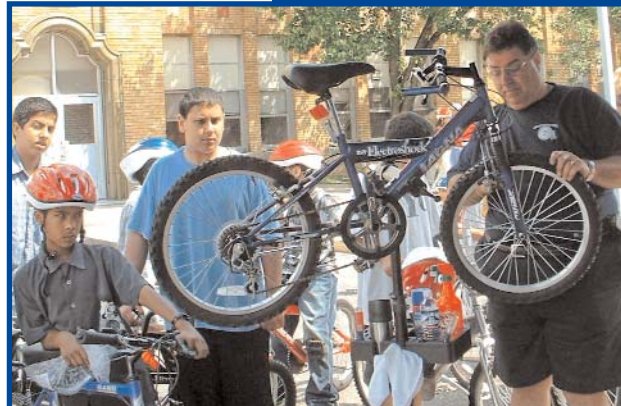
Jack was one of the volunteers who helped out in Hamtramck June 3, when about 200 children were fitted with helmets. It was one of 12 events the MTLA will be holding this year.

Jack ran the bike repair tent at the Hamtramck event and reports that he filled countless tires with air and adjusted many brakes and other parts on bikes that kids brought to the event.

MTLA's Jesse Green wrote that Jack "has been a faithful, hardworking, unbelievably giving volunteer for our events for many years. He travels all over the state on his own time, using his own tools and equipment and often carrying our big MTLA outdoor tent, setting it up and then tearing it down.

"The effort Jack puts into helping needy kids is truly awe inspiring," Green added. "He works out in the hot sun and in the rain and high winds. He arrives before the other volunteers, stays sometimes an hour after the others leave, and usually works straight through the day doing some pretty demanding physical labor."

Jack is obviously a wheelie good guy.



WCA Director Jack Nolish (right) gets a youngster's bicycle ready for the summer riding season, while others wait their turns to have their bikes inspected and repaired.

Commission for the Blind Scoops up Chili Trophy

By Susan Turney

On June 2, the weather in Lansing was warm, but the chili was hot! And for the second year in a row, the Michigan Commission for the Blind (MCB) won a handsome trophy at the Lansing Board of Water and Light Chili Cook-Off. This year, MCB took the bronze trophy for Best Meatless Chili.

A total of 39 organizations served 100 varieties of chili at this year's competition, with all proceeds going to Adopt A River and Pennies for Power.

MCB volunteers served 40 gallons of chili and handed out 1,000 Braille fortune cookies and Braille alphabet cards with information on MCB services. Some people wouldn't leave the table until they'd successfully deciphered their fortunes, and some teachers asked for extra Braille cards for their classrooms.

Constance Zanger, assistant administrator of the MCB Business Enterprise Program, is the "Chief Chili Organizer." "We start work on this in January," she said. "It's a group effort. During the cook-off, some people ask, 'What restaurant are you?' I tell them, 'We do the food service in state and federal buildings,' and then they know who we are."

Leamon Jones, director of MCB's Consumer Services, said, "It was a great event. We served a lot of chili, and we talked to a lot of people about our services for people who are blind and visually impaired.

MCB Business Enterprise Program Administrator Fred Wurtzel said, "All of the chili we served was prepared at the State Plate. It takes a lot of volunteer time to prepare 40 gallons of chili, but we're glad to help — it's all for a good cause."

Those who made MCB's participation possible also include Jade Burdick, Julia Burdick, Lucy Edmonds, Diamalyn Gaston, Jim Hamilton, Sherri Heibeck, Mary Jenkins, Carrie Martin, Bob Robertson, David Robinson, Robert Ruhl, James Slaughter, Anne Zanger, Janis Benstead, Lisa Marchione, James Hull, Larry LaFerriere, Dan Grover, Holly Grover, Sherry Gordon and Company (the only canine volunteer), Mike McAbee, Tom Bernick, Joe Pelle, and Susan Turney.



Constance Zanger, chief organizer of the event, holds the 2006 trophy surrounded by some of the MCB team. In the front row, l. to r., are Joe Pelle, Fred Wurtzel, Lucy Edmonds, Connie Zanger, Leamon Jones, and Diamalyn Gaston. In the back row are Sherri Heibeck, Jim Hamilton, and Bob Robertson.

People on the Move

Congratulations to Financial Specialist **Kathy Childers** and Financial Analyst **Bobbi Woods** in the Monitoring Unit, Internal Audit and Monitoring Division, who have been promoted to management positions. Kathy has been with the unit for seven years, and Bobbi, for four years. The Monitoring Unit is responsible for the compliance monitoring of approximately \$250 million in federal and state employment and training funds granted to 25 local areas across the state.

Congratulations to **Vivian Bodiford** in the General Industry Safety & Health Division (GISHD), Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA), who has been promoted to office supervisor. Vivian has worked in GISHD for 26 years; her most recent position has been lead worker of the IMIS clerical staff and sharing the position of office supervisor.

The Michigan Commission for the Blind Training Center in Kalamazoo is pleased to welcome **Mary Carter** as its newest secretary. Mary transferred from the Department of Human Services.

The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) is pleased to welcome six new members to its staff. One of two new faces in the Regulatory Affairs Division (RAD) is **John Gear**, a staff attorney who most recently worked for the Court of Appeals. John has a bachelor's degree in nuclear engineering from the University of Wisconsin, a Master of Engineering Management degree from Washington State University, and a law degree from Thomas M. Cooley Law School. Also new to RAD is **Marguerite Russell**, a staff attorney who most recently worked for the

Nevada Public Utilities Commission. Marguerite has a bachelor's degree in political science and philosophy from Aquinas College and a law degree from Gonzaga University School of Law.

MPSC's Regulated Energy Division, Rates and Tariff Section, welcomes two new analysts. **Steve McLean** is a 2003 graduate of Central Michigan University, where he majored in economics and political science. Steve is completing his master's degree in economics this summer. **Mark Pung** is a 2004 graduate of Michigan State University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in supply chain management. Before joining MPSC, Mark was a general supply specialist with the federal government.

Anne-Marie Clark is the newest member of MPSC's Telecommunications Division, Rates and Financial Analysis Section, where she serves as an analyst. She has a degree in mathematics from Western Michigan University. Also new to MPSC is **Linda Brauker**, previously a seasonal tax employee for the Department of Treasury. Linda serves as secretary in the Service Quality Division.

Best wishes to **Vita Gray**, industrial hygienist with the Consultation Education and Training Division, MIOSHA, who has moved to Boston because of her husband's job transfer. Vita had been with MIOSHA since June 2005.

Best goodbye wishes also go to **Jayne Szukalowski**, a safety consultant in MIOSHA's Consultation Education and Training Division. Jayne covered the Grand Rapids vicinity.

UIA's Dorothy Ruelle-Elliott Retires

By Norm Isotalo

When she joined state government in 1969, becoming a training officer was probably the last thing on her mind, yet 37 years later, Dorothy Ruelle-Elliott has retired from her post as director of the Unemployment Insurance Agency's (UIA) Center for Learning & Development (CLD).

While Dorothy left UIA at the end of May, she is not giving up training as she will be teaching a graduate-level course in counseling and staff development at the University of Michigan in Dearborn.

Dorothy originally started as an attendant nurse with the former Department of Mental Health, and as circumstances would have it, she took a supervisor's test. Her name was pulled from the list, and she was asked if she would be interested in becoming a trainer. The rest is history.

After working at the Plymouth Center for Human Development and the Northville State Hospital,

Dorothy left state government to work as a trainer with a nonprofit organization. After five years there, she rejoined state government as a trainer with the Department of Social Services. In 1990, she joined the Training Division with the Michigan Employment Security Commission and became CLD director in 1999.

She supervised a staff of 15, which Dorothy calls a close knit family that was a wonderful team to work with — and one that gives for the good of the agency.

In looking back on her years in training with UIA, Dorothy cited several accomplishments that she and her CLD staff have achieved. These include a standardized curriculum, a formal core of trainers from around the agency, a two-level evaluation process, the Leadershift Institute for staff interested in leading, and CESER (Center for Employment Security Employment & Research) training, which gave all agency staff instruction in customer service.



Dorothy Ruelle-Elliott

1st Place Winners in “Shaping Michigan’s Future”

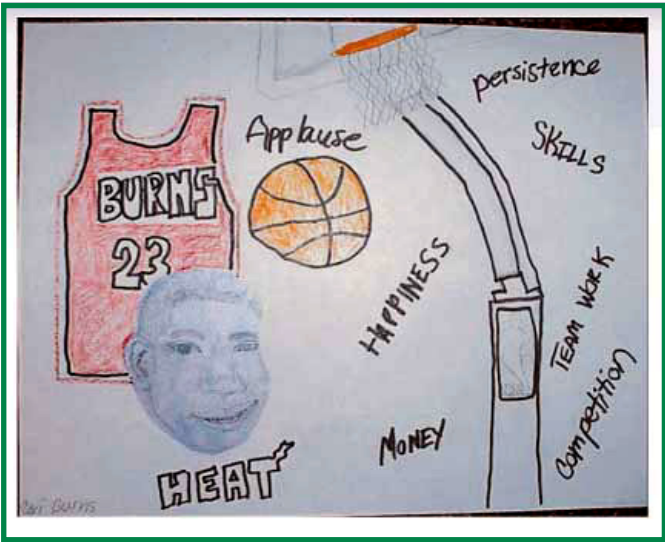
Rashna Soonavala
Ages 5-8



Christina Kerby
Ages 9-12



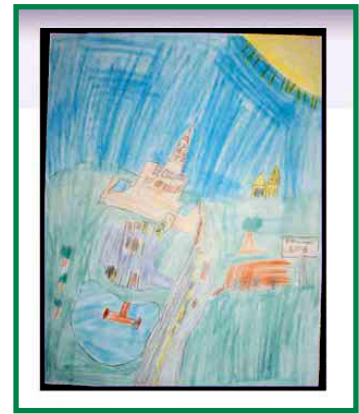
Cori Burns
Ages 13-18



2nd & 3rd Place Winners in “Shaping Michigan’s Future”



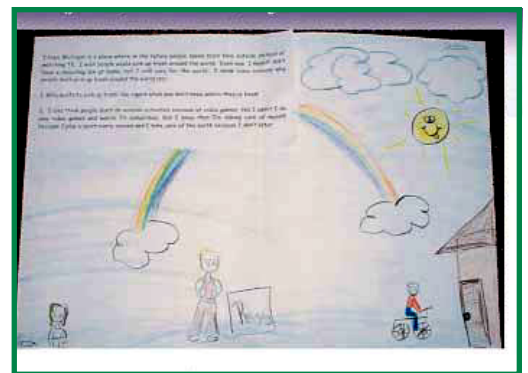
Sabrina Tran
2nd Place — Ages 5-8



Leigha Kobus
3rd Place — Ages 5-8



Taylor Barratt
2nd Place — Ages 9-12



Sadie Bass
3rd Place — Ages 9-12



Travis Collings
2nd Place — Ages 13-18



Sheena Moore
3rd Place — Ages 13-18

Professional Activities

The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) on May 24 presented its 2005 Employee of the Year Award to **Erika Vallance**, a secretary in the Motor Carrier, Energy Grants & Information Division. MPSC Chairman **J. Peter Lark** noted her "demonstrated ability to handle a vast amount of responsibility with the Low-Income and Energy Efficiency Fund grant program." Erika was also praised for her high performance level and "knowledge and experience with the utmost professionalism and determination." Receiving Honorable Mention awards were **Alan Droz**, an auditor in the Accounting and Auditing Section of the Regulated Energy Division, and **Pat Poli**, an engineer in the Operations & Wholesale Markets Division. Alan was cited for his work in the Consumers Energy rate case that saved Consumers Energy customers nearly \$300 million. Pat was lauded for her "hard work, good ideas and uncompromising commitment to high quality work" and her vital role in completing the Capacity Need Forum report. **Chad Page** and **Ryan Pung** each received the Outstanding Student of the Year Award — Chad, for his polite and professional demeanor and mastery of technical issues; and Ryan, for his expertise in resolving countless computer-related issues.

The Mid Michigan Regional Business Expo 2006, held at Saginaw Valley State University on May 3, was the best one ever according to feedback received. Nearly 3,000 job seekers attended the expo, which featured 240 exhibitors. Coordinated by Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) Bay City Counselor **Paul Kuehl**, the annual event was sponsored by the Bay Area, Midland Area, and Saginaw County chambers of commerce. The MRS Mid Michigan Business Service Team participated and provided information regarding employer services and agency services.

In the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA), the Marketing Committee of the Consultation Education and Training Division has prepared public service announcements (PSAs) for radio stations to use during their daily programming. The 10- and 20-second PSAs have been provided to all radio stations in Michigan. The 20-second PSA reads: ARE YOUR EMPLOYEES GETTING HURT ON THE JOB? ARE YOUR WORKERS' COMPENSATION COSTS RISING? MICHIGAN OSHA CAN PROVIDE FREE CONSULTATION AND TRAINING TO HELP YOU REDUCE ACCIDENTS AND IMPROVE YOUR BOTTOM LINE. PROVIDING SERVICE FOR 30 YEARS, MICHIGAN OSHA CAN "MAKE A DIFFERENCE" IN WORKPLACE SAFETY AND HEALTH. CALL TODAY-1-800-866-4674.

The latest Michigan Commission for the Blind (MCB) Employment Readiness Seminar was held in Clare on May 25, with 15 clients participating. More than 14 community partner organizations and employers and five MCB staff participated, providing valuable job-seeker skills and information. **Ray Kirklin** of the

Saginaw MCB office organized the event — the largest yet in Clare. At the close of the day, at least two individuals had job possibilities and another had an internship opportunity. "Matching employers with job-ready candidates is an essential part of this program. This has educational value in itself, but of course it's even better when real jobs are an outcome," said MCB Assistant Regional Manager **Elizabeth White**. "This is also the first Employment Readiness Seminar demonstrating our ongoing partnership with Michigan Rehabilitation Services, which referred two of the attendees. A big thank you needs to go to Ray Kirklin and to **Bonnie Betz** and **Jim Baird** of the MCB Training Center for coordinating this event." The post-event evaluations gave high ratings. The next MCB Employment Readiness Seminar is scheduled for Aug. 31 in Lansing. For details, please contact **Janis Benstead** at (517) 335-4262.

Duncan Wyeth, executive director of the Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns, delivered the commencement address at the June 9 graduation ceremony of Baker College of Owosso. Duncan spoke on disability as a diversity issue in the workforce and the community.

The St. Joseph — Benton Harbor *Herald-Palladium* printed an article in early June about Becky Weberg, a client of Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) counselor **Dennis Mahoney**. Becky, who has multiple sclerosis, has received assistance from MRS so that she can maintain her management position with the Berrien County Health Department. She oversees several areas of health promotion, including substance abuse prevention, infant mortality reduction, drinking/driving and drug education workshops, a teen pregnancy prevention program, and, most recently, a stop smoking campaign. The article said MRS "helps connect her with what she needs to be able to continue working. She has a special office chair, a keyboard adapter and computer software that allows her to talk into a microphone while the machine types what she says." Dennis is quoted: "She's a special lady in terms of her insight into her own situation and her willingness to have people help her with challenges. Becky has a good understanding of her disability and its long-term implications, and she has really taken the initiative to plan ahead."



Pictured at the Mid Michigan Regional Business Expo are MRS Mid Michigan District staff members (l. to r.) Linda Hartgrove, Alexa Matthews, and Rex Donoghue.

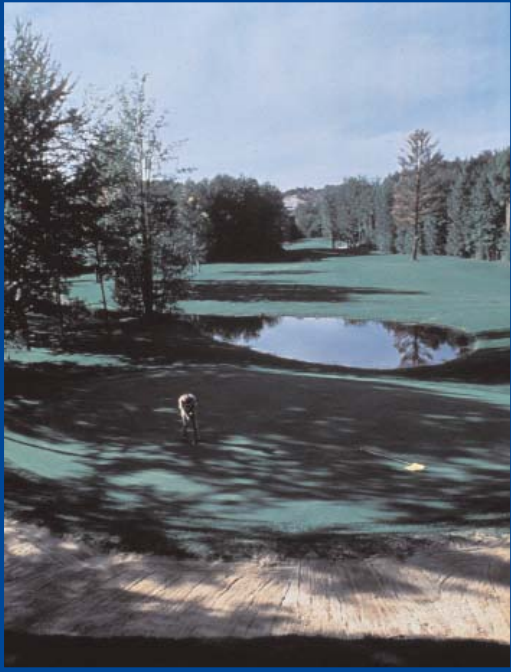
Department of Labor & Economic Growth

GOLF OUTING 2006

Ledge Meadows Golf Course

M-43, Grand Ledge

9:00 a.m., Friday, August 11, 2006



It's time to form your four-person team (men, women, or mixed) and sign up for DLEG's Annual Golf Outing. The format for the outing is a four-person team scramble at a cost of \$45.00 per person. This includes 18 holes of golf, cart, lunch, and prizes.

Most of us don't take this too seriously, so if you want to participate and don't have a team, we can assign you to one. Come on out to the course, meet your fellow workers, and have a good time!

YOUR COMMITTEE: Staci Smith, 322-6595 (smsmith@michigan.gov), Mr. Robin Spaulding, 322-1811 (rspaul@michigan.gov), or Kisha Spagnuolo, 241-2655 (kspagn@michign.gov). If you have any questions, call or send us an e-mail.

DLEG Golf Outing — August 11, 2006

SIGN-UP FORM

Deadline: August 1, 2006

Team Contact Person _____
Telephone Number: _____
E-Mail Address: _____

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____
Send payment to:
Mr. Robin Spaulding
4914 Churchill Road
Leslie, MI 49251

Four Team Members:

Cart #1

1. _____
2. _____

Cart #2

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DLEG Academy to Begin in August

Editor's Note: This issue of Michigan LEGwork continues to feature Meg & Reg of DLEG, who enjoy discussing current events in the department.

Meg: Have you heard about DLEG's new academy?

Reg: Well, actually, I've been "up north" on vacation. What did I miss?

Meg: Director Swanson has announced that the department will roll out a new DLEG Leadership Academy on Aug. 9. It will represent the next phase of leadership development following the MI 360 process that we completed earlier this year.

Reg: MI 360? Is that a new highway in the southwestern part of the state?

Meg: No, it's not a highway! DLEG managers and supervisors who took part in the MI 360 process gained insight into their strengths and areas for continued development. They were asked to develop a plan for improving their leadership abilities and getting the job done. To assist them in this ongoing effort, Director Swanson supports a Leadership Academy that initially will be offered to current supervisors and managers.

Reg: So, does that mean the Leadership Academy will be open only to the DLEG managers and supervisors who participated in the MI 360 process?

Meg: No, the academy will be open to all current supervisors and managers regardless of whether or not they participated in the MI 360 process.

Reg: Have I missed anything else?

Meg: As a matter of fact, you have. The DLEG Employee Growth and Development Team has been working with the Office of Human Resources to develop classes on communication and coaching skills. The initial classes will be rolled out by DLEG presenters in August and September.

Reg: How does someone enroll?

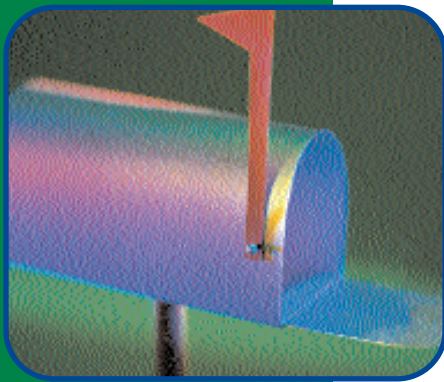
Meg: Enrollment information will be available soon. DLEG's goal is to offer these development courses to all interested employees in the near future because these core competencies are invaluable for everyone. The initiative also ties into the Governor's vision for developing Michigan as a great place to do great work.

Seventh Annual Youth Leadership Forum

Earlier this month, 33 high school students with disabilities attended the Michigan Youth Leadership Forum, an annual activity of the Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns. The forum is based on developing leadership by example. Successful adults with disabilities serve as mentors in their roles as program presenters and small group leaders. During the program June 11–15, the students learned about disability rights laws and innovations in technology and participated in mock employment interviews. The students also spent one day at the State Capitol, where they participated in a mock debate. This was the seventh year of the forum, which is hosted by Michigan State University.



We Get Letters ... and E-mails!



The Michigan Public Service Commission received a letter of appreciation from a customer for the work of **Howard Bradshaw**, Service Quality Division: "He patiently listened to us, verified our situation and made countless calls and wrote emails. ... Thanks to him we received a refund check. ... It is wonderful to know that help is available to consumers in Michigan. Thank you!"

Linda Swanson, an account technician with the Wage & Hour Division, recently provided an employer with prevailing wage rates and received the following complimentary e-mail response: "I received the prevailing wages we requested of you and thank you for your assistance, as well as your verifying phone call this morning. You're another great reason Michigan government works."

State Rep. Fred Miller sent this letter to Gov. Jennifer Granholm complimenting staff of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority: "I am writing in regard to the exceptional efforts of some amazing State of Michigan employees, **Riek Ballard**, **Heather Fraizer** and **Carolyn Cunningham** of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority. It seems that some never hesitate to criticize when the 'bureaucracy' responds slowly or unsatisfactorily, but that frequently the many good deeds go unnoticed. I did not want to miss such an opportunity. Recently, a nonprofit community group in Macomb County that provides affordable housing in blighted neighborhoods contacted me about a situation that threatened their funding and even their ability to exist. After meeting with representatives from the group, it became clear that the issues could be resolved through communication with the appropriate officials. Initially, I contacted Ms. Frazier, who was aware of the situation, and was able to provide me with valuable information that I was able to pass along to the nonprofit. As several complicated issues were involved, I requested a face-to-face meeting on behalf of the nonprofit with MSHDA officials. Ms. Frazier, Mr. Ballard and Ms. Cunningham were more than willing to accommodate the request and they made the trip to the organization's office in Macomb County. A very productive meeting ensued that left the issues well on the way to being resolved and all parties satisfied with the product and the process. No doubt you understand the high quality of men and women we have working for the state, but I wanted to bring to your attention the exemplary efforts of these three in particular. The dedication and professionalism that these fine public servants exhibited in this case showed their commitment to delivering the best customer service possible. In my estimation, their willingness to go above and beyond expectations has proved them to be the very best of what state government has to offer. In short, I was incredibly impressed by them and it renewed my

faith in the good that the public sector can do when we work together."

This e-mail message was sent to Michigan Commission for the Blind (MCB) East Region Manager **Gwen McNeal** regarding **Shawnese Laury-Johnson**, a rehabilitation counselor in the Detroit office who is also a former client of MCB: "Thank you ever so much for contacting Shawnese Laury-Johnson to be a speaker at our opening for the Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic 2006 Record-A-Thon, which began today. Shawnese was excellent. The volunteers with RFB&D always appreciate hearing from the members who make use of the recorded textbooks that they help produce, and Shawnese's praise for them was heartwarming. We are also in awe of this young woman's determination to be successful in life, as well as the fact that she helps others to overcome their disabilities too. She is a genuine role model for all of us."

A client of **Dave Petrovich**, a counselor at the Lansing District of Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS), sent in these comments: "The individual attention I received was excellent. Staff followed up several times and were very caring, genuine, and really sincere. Thank you for helping me. A special thanks to Dave Petrovich and **Rebecca S. Schrader** at Selective Case Management. They both deserve employee of the month!"

Leslie Dewberry, a counselor at the Battle Creek MRS office, is complimented in this note to the office: "Leslie Dewberry is a kind, helpful, strong, caring, and intelligent person. You are very lucky, as I was, to know her and have been guided by her helpfulness."

Joanne Hampton at MRS – Grand Rapids sent the following e-mail message to District Manager **Dave Parker**: "Employer called today to say thanks for referring [customer] to them for work. _____ has been employed with the company since June 2004, but will be leaving the company in early May. The employer stated that _____ has signed on with a company to play hockey. The employer stated the customer has been playing hockey after work, was scouted out by a team, and will start in early May. He was given \$10,000 sign-on bonus; salary will be \$80,000 year. The employer stated if this career did not work out for the customer he can come back to them. The employer asked if MRS had any others to replace him. His counselor was **Kathy Freeman**."

The Waterford MRS office received this note from a satisfied customer: "Just a short note to express my appreciation for services rendered to my son. **Kelley Kruse** [orientation/intake specialist] for handling the interview and giving direction to us for getting

[More] Letters ... and E-mails!

employment for my son; **Gail Spragg** [counselor] for assistance and direction to an employment consultant which led to a couple of employment possibilities for my son; and **Robert Tricker** for taking my son and exposing him to a couple of job possibilities and getting him a position in a great place with very nice people who treat my son very nice and have made him feel very comfortable.”

State Sen. Michael Switalski recently wrote a letter to Gov. Jennifer Granholm praising the efforts of the Unemployment Insurance Agency's (UIA) **Anna Ramos-Weese**, a UI examiner with the Centralized Response Team (CRT), and the entire CRT. The senator called Anna “a stellar person” and wrote: “Very recently I had a constituent who, in frustration, called your office to complain at how Macomb Community College had mishandled her paperwork. This ultimately resulted in the denial of unemployment benefits. She was connected with Anna, who, within 24 hours, had brought about a positive resolution to the issue. My staff tells me that they have had numerous dealings over the years with Anna and the other great CRT staff. They praise their professionalism, courtesy, great people skills and, above all, their fair and objective ability when assessing each case. You have an amazing ability to surround yourself with staffers who can competently and positively affect the lives of your constituents.”

A recent caller to UIA's Benefit Overpayment Collection Unit had kind words to write about **Lugenia Hawkins**, a UI examiner: “This letter is to express my wholehearted gratitude to Lugenia Hawkins. Mrs. Hawkins extended professional courtesy/cordialness that exemplifies true character in an era where inhumanity is in vogue. You should encourage this attitude in all your employees for their benefit as well as others; why? Because it's good for the soul.”

Karen Miron at UIA's Marquette Problem Resolution Office (PRO) received thanks from an Upper Peninsula resident for the work done by the Marquette PRO. He wrote that the “office help is great. They're up to date on all my unemployment needs.”

UIA's **Lansing Problem Resolution Office** received compliments from two writers recently. One wrote that he “was frustrated for a very long time. Thank you for all your hard work in helping me.” The other individual was impressed with the staff and wrote that the office has “exceptionally helpful and understanding people” who are “patient and professional.”

A worker in Louisiana who was unemployed because of Hurricane Katrina wrote to UIA's Detroit Remote Initial Claims Center (RICC) to thank **Cheryl Newton**, unemployment insurance examiner

(UIE), for her help in straightening out a problem he was having in trying to collect federal Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA). The worker and his family were displaced and living in Detroit when he initially filed for benefits. He wrote: “[Thanks to Cheryl's efforts] I was able to file claims online for prior weeks of DUA. Suffice it to say, my family budget, while still on life support, has some financial respite. And it is due to one kind and caring professional who just did not give up. She, in my opinion, went above and beyond and never made me feel that I was an irritant. The Detroit office is most fortunate to have Cheryl. She is a keeper.”

Another unemployed worker called the Detroit RICC to compliment UIE **Jacqueline Marlow** for her customer service. The caller said Jacqueline was “a wonderful person,” who took her time with the caller's claim and answered her questions thoroughly. Jacqueline was also “very sweet and empathized” with the caller when she gave her the bad news about the caller's unemployment claim.

If it were up to one unemployed worker, UIE **Lisa Paige** would get a raise. In a call to the Detroit RICC, the worker said Lisa was “extremely pleasant” and “was clear and concise with the information” she gave about the caller's claim.

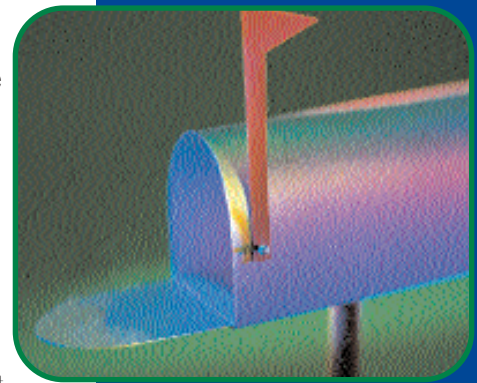
One caller offered to buy UIE **Denise Rushin** some flowers because she did such a good job in handling his claim. The caller said Denise was “very pleasant and helpful. She took her time and explained everything to him. ... She was very professional and has very good customer service skills.”

The Detroit RICC is lucky to have UIE **Timeka Johnson**, an unemployed worker recently wrote in a letter to the RICC. The writer said, “You are fortunate to have such a customer service-oriented person working for you. She has excellent communications skills.”

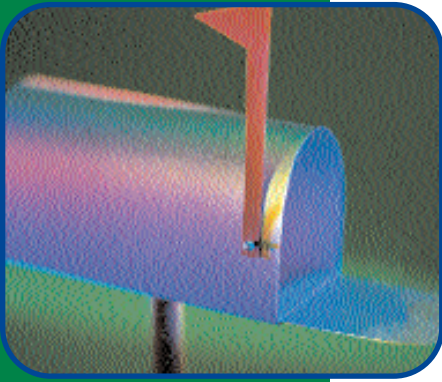
An unemployed worker called the Detroit RICC to compliment UIE **Edith Goodwin**. He said Edith was “extremely pleasant and provided prompt information” that was also clear and concise about the worker's claim.

An unemployed worker wrote to UIA's Grand Rapids RICC to report on the nice treatment he received from the center's staff. “They have all been so pleasant and helpful, and I feel that I should let someone know how nice it was to talk to someone who cared.” The writer spoke to several staff members, including UIE **Marion Seidor**.

An employer was shocked, in a good way, to hear



[More] Letters ... and E-mails!



from **Jill Andreau** and **Lisa Franke**. Both are members of the Work Distribution Center at the Grand Rapids RICC, and both recently called the same employer within minutes of each other to let the employer know that faxes she was sending to the center were not going through properly. The employer praised Jill and Lisa and said both had been very helpful and courteous in explaining the faxing problem.

Kay Neff, a UIE at the Saginaw RICC, made the day a happier one for one unemployed worker. The worker wrote thanking the RICC for having staff like Kay. "When I talked to her about my case, she was very nice, knowledgeable about her job and promptly gave me all the information required."

Diane Kott, a teacher at Nellie Reed Elementary School, Shiawassee Regional Education Service District, wrote this letter to **John Palmer**, UIA Customer Relations: "This is a letter of praise for one member of your staff, **Thomas Weisenburger** in the Saginaw Problem Resolution Office. As part of your Customer Relations program, employees are encouraged to do community service. That is what Tom did in our classroom at Nellie Reed Elementary in Vernon, MI, where his wife often works. Tom helped in two ways: One way was to offer technical assistance when our room was given a new TV with a DVD player. No one here had knowledge of setting them up. Hearing our need, Tom hooked them up so that the technology could be easily accessed by our staff and our (cognitively impaired) students. The second way Tom helped was when he heard our students enjoyed music and musical instruments. He brought to our classroom a variety of orchestra-quality instruments, including a cymbal, snare drum, chimes, tambourines and shakers for our students to play. All of the children enjoyed playing the instruments while Tom smiled and stayed in the background. My students' education was greatly enhanced by this musical experience. I am grateful to you for the community service program, and deeply grateful to Tom for his technical expertise and generosity in providing the instruments. Thank you very much!"

Steve Lyles, general manager of Mid-West Truck Accessories, Riverview, sent letters to both **Dave Humenick**, Consultation Education and Training Division, MIOSHA, and **Bart Pickelman**, General Industry Safety and Health Division, complimenting their presentation at a spray-on truck bed liner seminar. Mr. Lyles said their presentation "was very informative and helpful."

Jim Rosbalt, D.O., M.S.P.H., an occupational and environmental resident at Wayne State University, sent this letter to **Sundari Murthy** with MIOSHA's General Industry Safety and Health Division: "Today is my last day of the MIOSHA rotation. I want to thank you for coordinating this experience. I would also like to specifically recognize **Cindy Politowicz**, **Magnus Ndukwe** and **George Zagresky**. Each of these individuals was excellent! Each took the time and energy to include me on their site evaluations. In addition, each demonstrated a wealth of knowledge and were patient, excellent teachers. Please thank these professionals, and again, thank you for coordinating this experience."

Connie O'Neill, director of MIOSHA's Consultation Education and Training Division, received a thank you note regarding **Linda Long**, occupational safety consultant, complimenting the assistance Linda provided to Steve Monet, safety manager, Office of the State Employer: "I want to compliment Linda for helping move S&H forward in the State. Linda provided insight and suggestions that have made the Risk Assessment Survey a very useful tool. It is now easier to understand and use. I have shared it with DIT, DEQ, MDOT's Mackinaw Bridge and DCH's Hospitals and Centers. These compliments must be reserved for Linda."

MIOSHA's Construction Safety and Health Division received a letter from Claude J. Rowley of Rowley, Inc., Hudson: "On Monday, May 8, 2006, Officer **Baldemar Reyes** visited our job site for an inspection. Although most companies do not look forward to a MIOSHA inspection, I want to commend Officer Reyes on his professionalism. Officer Reyes was informational and educational, answered our questions, and treated all personnel with respect. Officer Reyes is a role model for your office."

DLEG Tiger Game Outing!

Friday, September 15, at 7:05 p.m.



vs.



Fireworks to Follow the Game!

Tickets

Tickets are \$10 each, a savings of \$2 off the regular price.

We will be sitting in the Upper Reserved Section 338, rows 10-16.

Visit: http://detroit.tigers.mlb.com/NASApp/mlb/det/ticketing/seating_pricing.jsp
and click on 339 to get a view of our seats. Payment is due by Friday, July 28, 4:00 p.m.

Parking Tips

Parking ranges from \$5 to \$20. Please see the link below for a map of the area and available parking (in blue).
<http://detroit.tigers.mlb.com/det/photo/ComericaAreaMap.pdf>

Contact Information

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Suite 12-200 Cadillac Place. ♦ E-mail: congdonvaleriea@michigan.gov
P-313-456-2145 ♦ F-313-456-2488

Ticket Order Form

Payment Deadline:
July 28, 2006

Name: _____ e-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

No. of Tickets: _____ @ \$10.00 = _____ Bureau: _____

Make checks payable to:
Valerie Congdon or "Cash"

Mail Form to:
Valerie Congdon, Unemployment Insurance Agency
Center for Learning and Development
3024 W. Grand Blvd.,
Suite 12-200 ♦ Detroit, MI 48202